

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (**Currently amended**): A socket system for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, comprising:

a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket that asserts substantially zero force as the pin of the IC device is inserted therein;

a compression mount lead on the socket that ~~presses~~ is compressed against the contact pad of the circuit board; and

a mechanism for coupling the pin to the compression mount lead ~~using~~ with only a lateral direction of force applied on the pin ~~during a process of coupling the pin to the compression mount lead,~~

wherein the lateral direction of the force applied on the pin is always perpendicular to a length of the pin such that the force applied on the pin is never directed toward the IC device.

Claim 2 (**Canceled**).

Claim 3 (**Currently amended**): The socket system of claim 2, wherein the mechanism for coupling the pin to the compression mount lead comprises:

forking leads coupled to the compression mount lead and surrounding the pin within the zif opening; and

an actuation plate and an actuation lever that press the forking leads against the pin with ~~force directed~~ the actuation plate being pressed toward the forking leads in only one lateral direction that is perpendicular to the length of the pin ~~against the forking leads during the process of coupling~~ such that the pin is coupled to the compression mount lead via the forking leads.

Claim 4 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 3, wherein top portions of

the forking leads contact a top portion of the pin toward the IC device to minimize an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

Claim 5 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a pogo spring.

Claim 6 (**Currently amended**): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a J-bend lead ~~having a bottom surface that presses~~ is compressed against the contact pad of the circuit board.

Claim 7 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket is mounted onto the circuit board such that the compression mount lead presses against the contact pad.

Claim 8 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 1, wherein substantially zero force is asserted on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

Claim 9 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 1, further comprising:
a back plate mounted to a back-side of the circuit board when the socket is mounted to a front-side of the circuit board.

Claim 10 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket and the circuit board are part of a test system for testing the IC device.

Claim 11 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket and the circuit board are parts for an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) machine.

Claim 12 (**Currently amended**): A socket system for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, comprising:
means for asserting substantially zero force on the pin of the IC device as the pin is

inserted into a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket; and

means for coupling the pin of the IC device within the zif opening to the contact pad of the circuit board using only a lateral direction of force applied on the pin ~~during a process of coupling the pin to the contact pad,~~

wherein the lateral direction of the force applied on the pin is always perpendicular to a length of the pin such that the force applied on the pin is never directed toward the IC device.

Claim 13 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 12, further comprising:
means for minimizing an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

Claim 14 (**Previously presented**): The socket system of claim 12, further comprising:
means for asserting substantially zero force on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

Claim 15 (**Currently amended**): A method for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, including the steps of:

asserting substantially zero force on the pin as the pin of the IC device is inserted into a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket;

~~pressing~~ compressing a compression mount lead on the socket against the contact pad of the circuit board; and

coupling the pin to the compression mount lead using only a lateral direction of force applied on the pin during a process of coupling the pin to the compression mount lead,

wherein the lateral direction of the force applied on the pin is always perpendicular to a length of the pin such that the force applied on the pin is never directed toward the IC device.

Claim 16 (**Canceled**).

Claim 17 (**Currently amended**): The method of claim 16, further including the step of:
pressing forking leads against the pin with ~~force directed~~ an actuation plate that is pressed

toward the forking leads in only one lateral direction that is perpendicular to the length of the pin
~~against the forking leads during the process of coupling within the zif opening~~ such that the pin
is coupled to the compression mount lead via the forking leads.

Claim 18 (**Previously presented**): The method of claim 17, wherein top portions of the forking leads contact a top portion of the pin toward the IC device to minimize an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

Claim 19 (**Previously presented**): The method of claim 15, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a pogo spring.

Claim 20 (**Currently amended**): The method of claim 15, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a J-bend lead ~~having a bottom surface that presses~~ is compressed against the contact pad of the circuit board.

Claim 21 (**Previously presented**): The method of claim 15, further including the step of: mounting the socket onto the circuit board such that the compression mount lead presses against the contact pad.

Claim 22 (**Previously presented**): The method of claim 15, further including the step of: asserting substantially zero force on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

Claim 23 (**Previously presented**): The method of claim 15, further including the step of: mounting a back plate to a back-side of the circuit board when the socket is mounted to a front-side of the circuit board.

Claim 24 (**Previously presented**): The method of claim 15, wherein the socket and the circuit board are part of a test system for testing the IC device.

Claim 25 (Previously presented): The method of claim 15, wherein the socket and the circuit board are parts for an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) machine.